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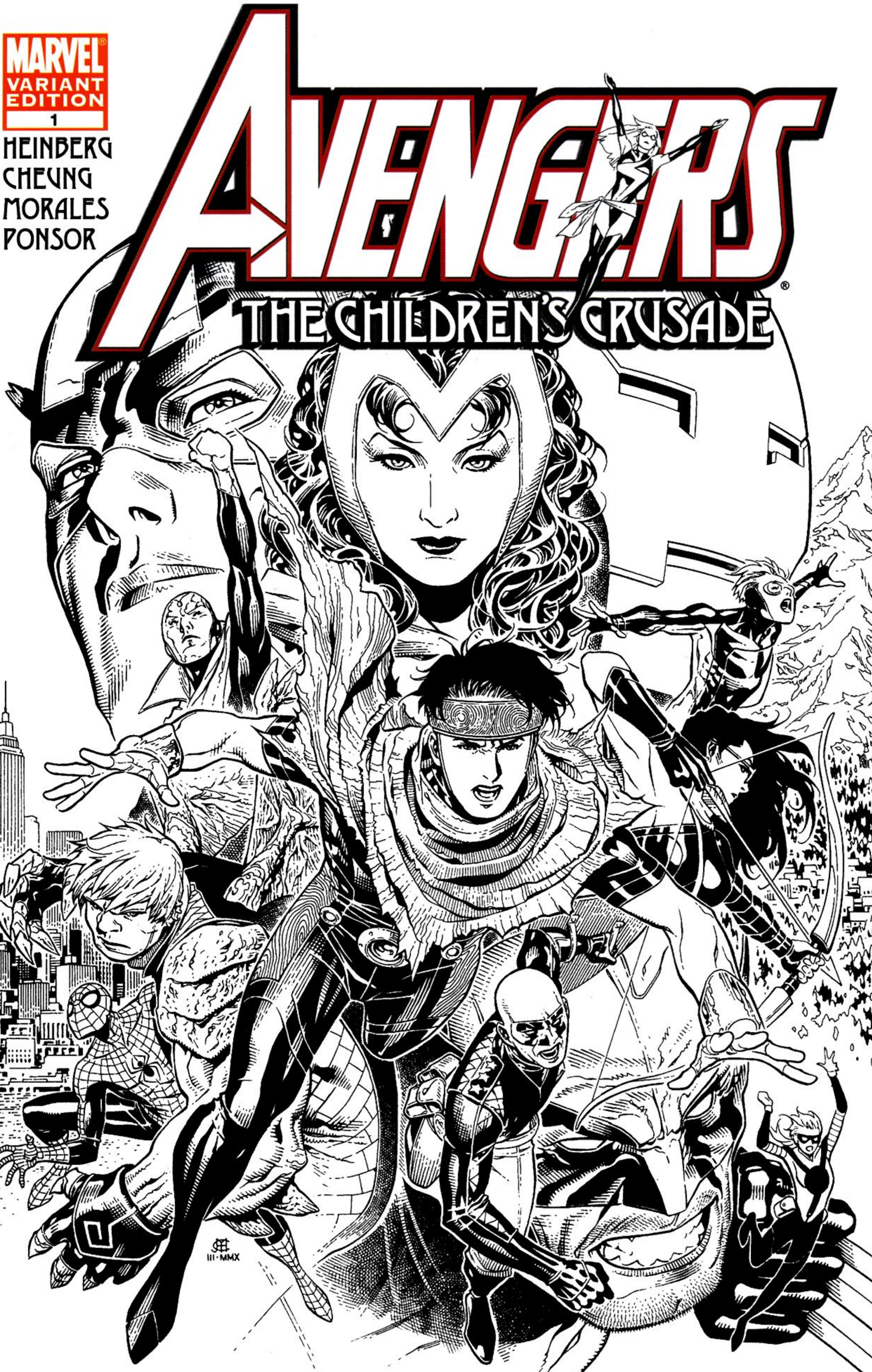

WOMEN of MARVEL®

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AVENGERS®

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

SCARLET WITCH

Est. 1964

AVENGERS
THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

United by friendship and bravery, Patriot, Hawkeye, Wiccan, Hulkling, Stature, Speed and the Vision are the Young Avengers, following in the footsteps of Earth's Mightiest Heroes!

NOTE: BECAUSE WORK BEGAN ON THIS SERIES MANY MONTHS AGO, THERE ARE SOME SEEMING DISCREPANCIES AS REGARDS THE ATTIRE OF CERTAIN CHARACTERS, PARTICULARLY CAPTAIN AMERICA AND IRON MAN. BY THE TIME THIS SERIES CONCLUDES, IT SHOULD BECOME APPARENT WHERE ITS EVENTS FALL WITHIN THE OVERALL ONGOING CONTINUITY. UNTIL THEN, WE FEEL CONFIDENT THAT OUR LOYAL READERS WILL BE ABLE TO OVERLOOK THESE SEEMING INCONSISTENCIES. RELAX, AND ENJOY THE SHOW...

ALLAN **HEINBERG** WRITER

JIM **CHEUNG** PENCILER

MARK **MORALES** WITH JIM CHEUNG INKERS

JUSTIN **PONSOR** COLORIST

VC'S CORY **PETIT** LETTERS

LAUREN **SANKOVITCH** ASSOCIATE EDITOR

TOM **BREVOORT** EDITOR

JOE **QUESADA** EDITOR IN CHIEF

DAN **BUCKLEY** PUBLISHER

ALAN **FINE** EXEC. PRODUCER

JIM CHEUNG & JUSTIN PONSOR COVER ART

JELENA DJURDJEVIC VARIANT COVER ART

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IN THE BEGINNING, NOBODY KNEW WHAT TO MAKE OF US.

SEVEN SUPER-POWERED AVENGERS FANS--WHO ONLY CAME TOGETHER BECAUSE THE AVENGERS THEMSELVES HAD FALLEN APART.

SINCE THEN, WE'VE FOUGHT KANG THE CONQUEROR, A SUPER HERO CIVIL WAR, A SECRET INVASION OF EARTH, AND A SIEGE ON ASGARD.

SO YOU'D THINK MAYBE THE AVENGERS WOULD *TRUST* US BY NOW...

...BUT WE'RE STILL FIGHTING TO PROVE WE'RE WORTHY OF BEING CALLED YOUNG AVENGERS

...EVEN IF IT *KILLS* US.

CASSIE LANG'S FATHER WAS THE MICROSCOPIC ANT-MAN. AFTER HIS DEATH, CASSIE USED HER DAD'S PYM PARTICLES TO FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS AS THE SIZE-CHANGING STATURE

ANY INTEL ON THESE GUYS, VISION?

VISION IS THE LATEST ITERATION OF THE ANDROID AVENGER WHO CAN MANIPULATE HIS OWN DENSITY--AND WHOSE SYNTHEZOID SOUL MAKES HIM EVERY BIT AS HUMAN AS THE REST OF US.

THEY CALL THEMSELVES THE SONS OF THE SERPENT-- A PARAMILITARY SECT DEVOTED TO MAINTAINING RACIAL AND MORAL PURITY.

ELI BRADLEY'S GRANDFATHER WAS THE ORIGINAL CAPTAIN AMERICA. A THIRD GENERATION SUPER-SOLDIER, ELI CONTINUES TO FIGHT FOR PEACE AS PATRIOT

THEY'RE WHITE SUPREMACISTS.

TO BE FAIR, THEY ALSO HATE GAYS AND LESBIANS.

AND UPPITY WOMEN APPARENTLY.

THEN WE MUST BE THEIR LEAST FAVORITE SUPER HERO TEAM EVER.

FORMER NEW YORK SOCIETY DEB KATE BISHOP SO IMPRESSED CAPTAIN AMERICA ON THE BATTLEFIELD THAT HE GAVE HER CLINT BARTON'S BOW AND DUBBED HER THE NEW HAWKEYE

TOMMY SHEPHERD HAS SUPER-SPEED, WHITE HAIR, AND A CRIMINAL PAST--ALL OF WHICH HE SHARES WITH THE FORMER AVENGER QUICKSILVER. FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, HE'S CALLED SPEED

SOUNDS LIKE THE WORLD WOULD BE BETTER OFF WITHOUT THEM.

THAT'S HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT US, SO GO EASY. THEY DON'T HAVE POWERS, JUST TECH.

THANKS TO ME, NOW THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE THAT.

HE ALSO HAPPENS TO LOOK EXACTLY LIKE ME. WHICH--IN ADDITION TO MY HAVING MAGIC POWERS--MAKES ME THINK TOMMY AND I MIGHT ACTUALLY BE THE LONG LOST TWIN SONS OF QUICKSILVER'S SISTER, THE SCARLET WITCH. MY NAME IS BILLY KAPLAN, BUT IN THE FIELD I'M CALLED WICCAN

A SUPER-STRONG SHAPE-SHIFTER, TEDDY ALTMAN IS THE SON OF THE KREE CAPTAIN MARVEL. LIKE HIS LATE FATHER, TEDDY PROTECTS THE PLANET AS HULKLING

HE'S ALSO MY BOYFRIEND.

"AS THE SERPENT DROVE ADAM AND EVE FROM EDEN...SO SHALL WE DRIVE OUT THE UNFIT-- THE INFERIOR!"

YOU'RE ACTUALLY USING THE BIBLE TO JUSTIFY MURDER?

WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT THE BIBLE, SODOMITE?

THIS SODOMITE WENT TO AN EPISCOPAL SCHOOL FOR SIX YEARS. SO IF YOU WANT TO SWAP BIBLE VERSES, HOW ABOUT EXODUS TWENTY-ONE, VERSE TWENTY-FOUR...

...“AN EYE FOR AN *EYE.*”

DO IT. *MARTYR* ME AND SHOW THE WORLD EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF *MONSTER* YOU ARE.

RRRIIIP

IF YOU *INSIST.*

SMAK

YOU'LL BURN IN HELL FOR THAT.

WAIT--YOU SPEND YOUR FREE TIME *KILLING* PEOPLE, BUT *I'M* GOING TO HELL FOR *KISSING* YOU?

IT WASN'T EVEN A *GOOD* KISS.

PROVERBS 12:28. “IN THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS EVERLASTING LIFE...”

“... BUT THE WAY OF THE EVIL-DOER ENDS IN DEATH.”

ZZZAT

HULKLING!!!

I HAVE TO ADMIT, I *UNDERESTIMATED* YOU GUYS.

I THOUGHT THE SONS OF THE SERPENT WOULD AT LEAST BE *RACIST* ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT HULKLING IS HALF-*KREE*, WHICH MAKES HIM *INVULNERABLE*...

...UNLIKE *YOU.*

DROP YOUR WEAPONS, PUT YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR, AND STEP AWAY FROM THE KIDS.

MS. MARVEL

I BELIEVE *I'LL* BE GIVING THE ORDERS, CAPTAIN--IF ONLY BECAUSE OF THE *NUCLEAR WEAPON* STRAPPED TO MY BACK.

IRON MAN

DO IT *NOW...*

...OR MY FRIENDS AND I WILL BE FORCED TO DEMONSTRATE JUST HOW VULNERABLE YOU REALLY *ARE.*

CAPTAIN AMERICA

LET HIM GO, OR YOURS WILL BECOME A *SUICIDE* MISSION.

YOU'D RISK MILLIONS OF HUMAN LIVES FOR ONE ALIEN INVERT?

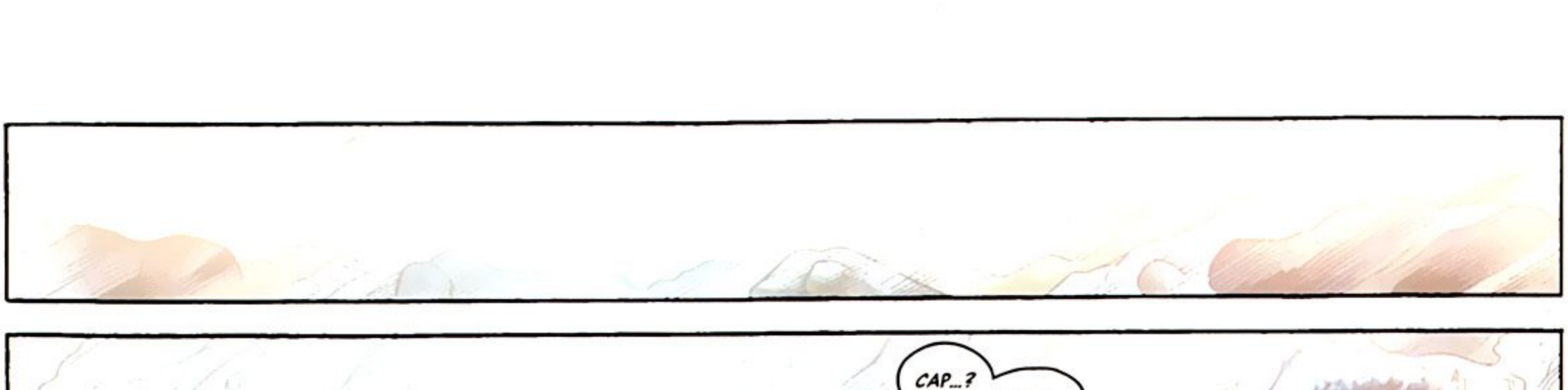
TRY ME.

THEN LET WHAT HAPPENS HERE TODAY SERVE AS A *WARNING* THAT THE WAGES OF *SIN...*

...ARE *DEATH.*

TEDDY!

CAP...?
IRON MAN?
KIDS?


WE'RE OKAY.
ALL SYSTEMS ONLINE.
HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?
IF THAT GUY HAD A NUKE, SHOULDN'T WE ALL BE DEAD?

IT WASN'T THE NUKE THAT WENT OFF...

...IT WAS WICCAN.

"DID I KILL THOSE MEN?"

YOUNG AVENGERS HEADQUARTERS.

THEY WERE ALL RENDERED COMATOSE.

THE HOSPITAL JUST CALLED TO SAY THE FIRST ONES ARE WAKING UP NOW-- BUT NONE OF THEM HAS ANY IDEA WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM.

DO **WE** HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?

WICCAN?

I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW.

ONE MINUTE WE WERE FIGHTING THE SONS OF THE SERPENT, AND THE NEXT...

YOU PUT THEM ALL INTO COMAS WITH A SINGLE ***THOUGHT***. YOU MIGHT JUST AS EASILY HAVE ***KILLED*** THEM.

I WOULD ***NEVER***--

YOU DON'T KNOW ***WHAT*** YOU'RE CAPABLE OF, WICCAN. AND NEITHER DO ***WE***.

SO YOU'RE GOING TO BE STAYING WITH ***US*** FOR A WHILE.

WHAT? ***WHY?***

BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT ANOTHER ***SCARLET WITCH*** ON OUR HANDS.

WHAT IS ***THAT*** SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

CAROL--

TELL HIM, TONY.

HE SHOULD ***KNOW***.

THE SCARLET WITCH HAS THE POWER TO ALTER REALITY TO SUIT HER WHIM--WHICH MAKES HER THE MOST POWERFUL AND DANGEROUS ENTITY IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE.

SHE BLAMED THE AVENGERS FOR THE LOSS OF HER SONS AND LASHED OUT AT US, LOSING CONTROL OF HER POWERS, AND CAUSING THE DEATHS OF THE ORIGINAL VISION, HAWKEYE, AND CASSIE'S DAD, ANT-MAN.

HER FATHER, MAGNETO, AND HER BROTHER, QUICKSILVER, TOOK HER TO THE ISLAND OF GENOSHA TO HELP HER RECOVER...

... BUT FEARING FOR HIS SISTER'S SAFETY, QUICKSILVER PERSUADED WANDA TO USE HER POWERS TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD INTO ONE WHERE MAGNETO AND HIS FAMILY REIGNED SUPREME...

... UNTIL THOSE OF US WHO WERE ABLE TO REMEMBER OUR FORMER LIVES FOUGHT TO RECLAIM THEM.

DEVASTATED BY ALL THE BLOOD SHED BY HER FAMILY IN THE NAME OF MUTANTKIND, THE SCARLET WITCH CAST ONE LAST SPELL...

NO MORE MUTANTS.

...ROBBING OVER A MILLION MUTANTS OF THEIR POWERS AND COMMITTING WHAT SOME CONSIDER MUTANT GENOCIDE.

AND YOU THINK I HAVE THE POWER TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

...BECAUSE YOU BELIEVE TOMMY AND I REALLY *ARE* THE SONS OF THE SCARLET WITCH?

OY, HERE WE GO...

TOMMY HAS DOUBTS, BUT HOW *ELSE* DO YOU EXPLAIN A *SPEEDSTER* AND A *WITCH* NAMED "THOMAS" AND "WILLIAM" WHO COULD BE *TWINS?*

IF WE COULD ONLY FIND HER--

SHE'S GONE, WICCAN. WHEN THE WORLD OF M DISAPPEARED, SO DID THE SCARLET WITCH.

AND DID YOU EVER FIND OUT WHO WAS *REALLY* RESPONSIBLE?

FOR WHAT?

THE WORLD OF M? THE MUTANT DECIMATION?

THE *SCARLET WITCH* WAS RESPONSIBLE.

THAT'S *IMPOSSIBLE.*

SOMEONE ELSE HAD TO BE *CONTROLLING* HER. THE SCARLET WITCH WAS AN *AVENGER*--

THE SCARLET WITCH WAS A *MURDERER*

SHE *MURDERED* HER TEAMMATES. SHE WIPED OUT AN ENTIRE *RACE*. SHE WAS MAGNETO'S DAUGHTER TO THE END.

ARE YOU *SURE* ABOUT THAT?

AFTER ALL THE YEARS SHE FOUGHT AT YOUR SIDE, YOU'RE NOT EVEN WILLING TO GIVE HER THE BENEFIT OF THE *DOUBT?*

THEN WHAT HAPPENS TO *ME* IF I TURN OUT TO BE MAGNETO'S *GRANDSON?*

I SEE.

SOME HEROES *YOU* TURNED OUT TO BE.

WICCAN--

I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN, BUT I WON'T BE STAYING FOR YOUR *EVALUATION.*

BILLY...

...CAN WE TALK ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU JUST WALKED OUT ON THE *AVENGERS?*

I DID *NOT.*

I WALKED OUT ON *CAP* AND *IRON MAN* AND--

LIKE I *SAID--*

THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE ME *PRISONER*

THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE YOUR *TEMPERATURE.*

I THINK.

YOU THINK?

OH, MY GOD.

I JUST WALKED OUT ON THE *AVENGERS.*

WHY IS THAT A *BAD* THING? EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES ARE *AFRAID* OF YOU. THAT'S HOW *POWERFUL* YOU ARE.

BY WALKING OUT, YOU PROBABLY EARNED THEIR *RESPECT.* EVEN *I'M* HATING YOU A LITTLE LESS THAN USUAL.

THANKS, TOMMY. THAT MEANS A LOT.

NOW, WOULD ANYONE *OTHER* THAN THE TEAM *SOCIOPATH* CARE TO WEIGH IN ON THIS?

GUYS...?

BILLY, YOU TOOK OUT *TWENTY* GUYS WITH GUNS AND NUKES ALL BY *YOURSELF.*

AND YOU DON'T EVEN REMEMBER *DOING* IT.

TWENTY *BAD* GUYS, KATE...

...AND I DIDN'T *HURT* THEM.

YOU *COULD* HAVE.

I WOULD *NEVER*--

...YOU LOST CONTROL.

SO YOU THINK THE AVENGERS ARE *RIGHT* ABOUT ME?

BILLY...

I DIDN'T *SAY* THAT.

YOU'RE JUST AFRAID THEY *MIGHT* BE.

CAN WE PLEASE JUST *TALK* ABOUT THIS LIKE THE MATURE, SEMI-ADULT SUPER HEROES WE WANT THE AVENGERS TO *THINK* WE ARE?

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN WHAT THE AVENGERS THINK ANYMORE.

AND THIS IS *MY* PROBLEM. NOT YOURS.

I'LL FIGURE IT OUT BY MY...

...SELF.

SON...?

IS IT TRUE?

MY WHOLE LIFE, I'VE DREAMED THAT ONE DAY CAPTAIN AMERICA WOULD SHOW UP AND ASK ME TO MOVE IN WITH THE AVENGERS.

SO, IT'S *TRUE* WHAT THEY SAY...

...BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU *WISH* FOR.

IT'S JUST UNTIL WE GET A SENSE OF WHAT YOU'RE *CAPABLE* OF.

CAP? ARE YOU SERIOUSLY TRYING TO HAIL US A *CAB* RIGHT NOW?

UNLESS *YOU'D* RATHER TAKE THE *SUBWAY*. BECAUSE, UNLIKE IRON MAN, I CAN'T...

...FLY.

THIS IS ONE OF THE THINGS I'M *CAPABLE* OF.

UNLESS *YOU'D* RATHER TAKE THE SUBWAY.

ARE YOU KIDDING?

THIS IS *SO* MUCH BETTER THAN RIDING ON IRON MAN'S BOOT.

C'MON, I'LL *RACE* YOU.

"CAP? MAY I ASK YOU SOMETHING?"

YOU'VE KNOWN THE SCARLET WITCH LONGER THAN ***ANYONE***. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO ***MADE*** HER AN AVENGER.

IN ALL THAT TIME, DID YOU ***EVER*** THINK SHE'D BE CAPABLE OF HURTING HER OWN TEAMMATES?

NEVER.

BUT LOSING A CHILD--LOSING TWO CHILDREN--IT ***CHANGES*** YOU. THAT'S SOMETHING YOU NEVER RECOVER FROM.

BUT I DON'T THINK SHE ***HAS*** LOST HER KIDS.

BILLY, I JUST MET YOUR PARENTS. YOUR ***BIOLOGICAL*** PARENTS--

I'M NOT SAYING TOMMY AND I ARE THE ***BIOLOGICAL*** SONS OF THE SCARLET WITCH. I'M NOT ***INSANE***. I'M TALKING ABOUT THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS.

WHICH, NOW THAT I'M SAYING IT OUT LOUD, SOUNDS A LITTLE INSANE.

I HAVE TO WARN YOU, A CONNECTION TO WANDA IS ***NOT*** GOING TO WIN YOU ANY FRIENDS WHEN WE GET TO AVENGERS TOWER.

DID YOU GUYS EVEN ***CONSIDER*** THAT SHE MIGHT BE ***INNOCENT?***

I WAS THERE. SHE'S ***NOT*** INNOCENT.

BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW SHE WASN'T ***POSSESSED*** BY SOMEONE? BY ***IMMORTUS***. OR ***CHTHON!*** IT HAPPENED BEFORE. IT COULD HAPPEN ***AGAIN.***

BECAUSE DR. STRANGE WOULD HAVE DETECTED IT.

I HEARD DR. STRANGE'S POWERS AREN'T WHAT THEY ***USED*** TO BE.

YOU THINK YOU'RE MORE POWERFUL THAN DR. STRANGE?

I GUESS THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT.

NOT WITHOUT ***ME***, YOU'RE NOT.

TEDDY!

HULKLING, I UNDERSTAND YOU WANT TO PROTECT YOUR FRIEND, BUT--

CAPTAIN, I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT ***BILLY***. BUT IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO HIM...

...YOUR PRIMARY CONCERN SHOULD BE ***ME***.

TED--

BILLY AND I ARE ***PARTNERS***. WHERE HE GOES, ***I*** GO. AND IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT--

I HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH THAT.

YOU DON'T?

YOU ***DON'T?***

NO. IN FACT...

"...I'LL HAVE JARVIS PREPARE YOUR ROOM."

TWIN BEDS?

IS IT A GUEST ROOM OR A HOLDING CELL?

IT'S JUST A LITTLE LACKING IN *MAGIC*, THAT'S ALL.

BETTER?

MINTS ON THE PILLOWS. NICE TOUCH.

I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF.

I'M NOT COMPLAINING.

SORRY ABOUT TODAY.

YOU COULDN'T HELP YOURSELF.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY'LL DO TO ME?

THEY'LL RUN SOME *TESTS*-- YOU'LL SIT DOWN WITH *DR STRANGE*-- AND THEN WE'RE OUT OF HERE.

PROMISE?

PROMISE.

ARE WE ABOUT TO MAKE OUT IN AVENGERS HEADQUARTERS?

THE MINUTE YOU STOP TALKING.

I'M NOT TALKING ANYMORE.

AS OF NOW. THAT WAS THE LAST TALKING.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU IDIOTS DOING?

TOMMY--

WE GO TO ALL THE TROUBLE TO ***RESCUE*** YOU, AND YOU TWO ARE IN HERE ***MAKING OUT?*** YOU'RE ***PRISONERS***. PRISONERS DON'T STAND AROUND MAKING OUT WITH EACH OTHER.

DO THEY?

SORRY TO INTERRUPT, GENTLEMEN...

...BUT I CAN ONLY DISRUPT THE ALARM SYSTEM FOR ***SO*** LONG BEFORE THE AVENGERS NOTICE.

BILLY, CAN YOU MAGIC US ***OUT?***

ACTUALLY, TOMMY--

I GUESS IF YOU ***COULD***, YOU WOULDN'T ***BE*** HERE, RIGHT?

THE PROBLEM IS--

THERE'S NO PROBLEM. HOLD ON TIGHT.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

ACCELERATING OUR COLLECTIVE MOLECULES FAST ENOUGH TO VIBRATE THROUGH THAT WALL...

...IDEALLY WITHOUT EITHER OF YOU BECOMING UNSTABLE AND ***EXPLODING*** IN THE PROCESS.

I THINK I'M GOING TO BE S-S-S-SICK.

T-T-T-TOMMY, S-S-S-STOP!

I'M D-D-D-***DEFINITELY*** GOING TO BE S-S-S-SICK.

DO ***NOT*** YAK ON ME. I ***WILL*** KILL YOU.

AND RUIN AN OTHERWISE PERFECT RESCUE MISSION?

I CAN'T *BELIEVE* IT.

YOU GUYS *ALL* SHOWED UP TO RESCUE ME?

WE'RE *FAMILY*. WE STICK TOGETHER NO MATTER *WHAT* SCARY, UNSTOPPABLE POWERS YOU MAY HAVE.

PLUS, IF YOU *DO* HAVE SCARY, UNSTOPPABLE POWERS, WE'RE THINKING WE SHOULD PROBABLY BE ON *YOUR* SIDE.

BUT IF THE *AVENGERS* FIND OUT--

LET *US* DEAL WITH THE AVENGERS. YOU AND TEDDY NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE.

YOU GUYS ARE ACTUALLY WILLING TO TAKE ON THE AVENGERS FOR *ME?*

IF IT COMES TO THAT.

THAT'S THE *WORST* IDEA I'VE EVER HEARD.

YEAH, WE'RE HOPING IT DOESN'T *COME* TO THAT.

I CAN'T THANK YOU GUYS ENOUGH FOR BREAKING ME *OUT*, BUT...

...I THINK I NEED YOU TO BREAK ME BACK *IN*.

WHAT?

WHY?

BECAUSE IF I *RUN*, THEY'RE JUST GOING TO *FIND* ME.

WHAT OTHER *CHOICE* DO I HAVE?

YOU COULD FIND THE *SCARLET WITCH*.

THINK ABOUT IT. ***BILLY'S*** NOT THE PROBLEM. THE PROBLEM IS ***WANDA MAXIMOFF.***

SHE'S THE ONE WHO LOST HER MIND. ***SHE'S*** THE ONE WHO MADE MUTANTS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES. ***SHE'S*** THE ONE WHO ***MURDERED*** MY DAD.

AND ***WHY*** DID SHE DO ALL THAT?

BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT SHE'D LOST HER KIDS.

SO IF WE CAN ***SHOW*** HER THAT HER SONS ARE ALIVE AND WELL, SHE CAN ***UNDO*** ALL OF IT.

SHE CAN REVERSE THE SPELL, GIVE THE MUTANTS BACK THEIR POWERS...

...AND SHE CAN BRING MY DAD BACK TO LIFE.

*CASSIE, I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU **MISS** YOUR FATHER, BUT--*

VISION, SHE ALREADY BROUGHT WONDER MAN BACK FROM THE DEAD. ***AND*** CLINT BARTON. SO WHY NOT MY DAD?

IF WE REALLY ARE A ***FAMILY***, WE SHOULD AT LEAST ***TRY***. FOR BILLY'S SAKE.

MY SENTIMENTS EXACTLY, CHILD...

...WHICH IS WHY I THINK IT'S TIME YOU BOYS MET YOUR GRANDFATHER,

MAGNETO

TO BE CONTINUED...

MINUTEMEN
SCANS
MEGANUBIS
VARIANTS BY SCANDOG